

House Republicans Want to Repeal the Affordable Care Act, Yet Continue to Offer No Replacement

This week, Speaker Paul Ryan and House Republicans will unveil the fifth plank of their policy platform, which they are calling “A Better Way.” House Republicans claim that they will lay out their plan to repeal and replace the Affordable Care Act. However, like each of the other planks of their #WrongWay plan, House Republicans aren’t actually putting any specifics or details forward.

Since President Obama signed the Affordable Care Act into law six years ago, Republicans have been intent on repealing it, and year after year, Republican leaders have claimed that they will unveil an alternative plan:

Pledge to America: “We offer a plan to repeal and replace the government takeover of health care with commonsense solutions focused on lowering costs and protecting American jobs.” [GOP Pledge to America, [9/20/10](#)]

Speaker Paul Ryan: “We are going to unveil a plan to replace every word of Obamacare.” [Speech, [12/3/15](#)]

Majority Whip Steve Scalise: “The American people can’t afford to wait any longer for Congress to repeal and replace Obamacare. The time is now to bring an Obamacare replacement bill to the House floor that lowers costs and puts patients back in charge of their health care decisions.” [Politico, [5/29/14](#)]

But as they vote for the 64th time to repeal or undermine the health care law this week, they still don’t have a serious alternative. Early press reports suggest that the “new” health care agenda Speaker Ryan plans to introduce is only a broad outline with no details or specifics:

“House Republicans’ ObamaCare replacement plan will not include specific dollar figures on some of its core provisions, and will instead be more of a broad outline...Keeping the plan in the form of a broad outline puts off some of the difficult tradeoffs and preempts lines of attack that would be raised with a specific and detailed plan.” [The Hill, [6/15/16](#)]

“Even though Republicans keep promising over and over that they’re just about to unveil a serious plan to replace Obamacare, and the news media keeps reporting these promises at face value, it never happens...Conservative ideas would throw tens of millions of people off their insurance, raise taxes for many more people, make basic medical care unaffordable to people who can now access it...” [New York Magazine, [6/16/16](#)]

The Center on Budget and Policy Priorities analyzed the effects of repealing the Affordable Care Act and the damaging consequences of the Republican health care agenda:

- By eliminating Medicaid expansion and insurance marketplaces, most of the 20 million adults who gained coverage under the Affordable Care Act would lose it;
- Insufficient subsidies would prevent many from buying quality health insurance in the individual market; and
- Premiums would increase for older Americans and low-income adults who gained coverage under the Medicaid expansion would be at risk of becoming uninsured.

Even as House Republicans pledge to repeal the Affordable Care, statistics from the Department of Health and Human Services and the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services show that the health care law is working:

- Less than 10% of Americans are uninsured.
- Twenty million previously uninsured Americans have gained health insurance; including 6.1 million young adults.
- 129 million Americans do not have to worry about being denied coverage or charged higher premiums due to pre-existing conditions.
- 105 million Americans no longer have a lifetime limit or an annual limit on their health care coverage.
- Nearly 10.7 million seniors have saved over \$20.8 billion on prescription drugs – an average of \$1,945 per senior.
- An estimated 39.2 million people with Medicare took advantage of at least one preventive service with no copays or deductibles last year and nearly 9 million Medicare beneficiaries took advantage of an annual wellness visit.
- Americans have saved \$9 billion because of a provision requiring insurance companies to spend at least 80 percent of every premium dollar they receive on health care.

While House Republicans continue their efforts to repeal and undermine the Affordable Care Act, Democrats will work to defend the ACA so that every American has access to affordable and quality health care.